

Prudential Gives \$500K Towards Military Park Renovation

Project to break ground next spring

By Joshua Wilwohl - November 15, 2011



Newark's Military Park Restoration Project has received a boost from Prudential after the financial giant approved a \$500,000 grant towards the park's \$3.65 million revamp.

The grant will support the costs of project management, consultation, design and engineering, according to Sharon C. Taylor, Prudential's senior vice president of human resources.

"Our support for this restoration project reflects the Prudential Foundation's commitment to urban redevelopment and to Prudential's pride in its headquarters city," she said.

The Prudential Foundation's board of trustees approved the grant during its monthly meeting in October, but announced the cash Tuesday.

The project is expected to break ground next spring, according to Ben Donsky, Military Park's project manager at Biederman Redevelopment Ventures, an open space consulting firm in charge of the restoration.

He said the makeover includes eliminating graffiti, adding more shrubbery, fixing broken light fixtures and paving pathways.

"Primarily, what we're doing is fixing the things that are broken," said Donsky.

Prudential, which is headquartered two blocks from the park, isn't the only organization paying into the project — several nonprofits and the city of Newark also are picking up some of the tab.

Anne Torres, a city spokeswoman, said the city is delving out \$2 million.

The six-acre, triangular park is adorned with military statues and is wedged between Broad Street and Park Place in Newark's downtown. Because of the park's location and size, it normally serves as an anchor for protests, rallies and events.

Donsky said if the project stays on schedule, the park will be closed a few months and re-opened by Labor Day 2012.